

Bids for Harbor Dredging Project Lower Than Projected

By Kimberley Keyes

The lowest bid for the long-awaited dredging of Duxbury Bay came in almost half a million dollars lower than expected.

All parties involved in the project, on the federal, state and local levels, could benefit from the potential savings, officials said.

Three bids were opened last Thursday by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The dredging, expected to start this summer, had been projected to cost \$2.3 million.

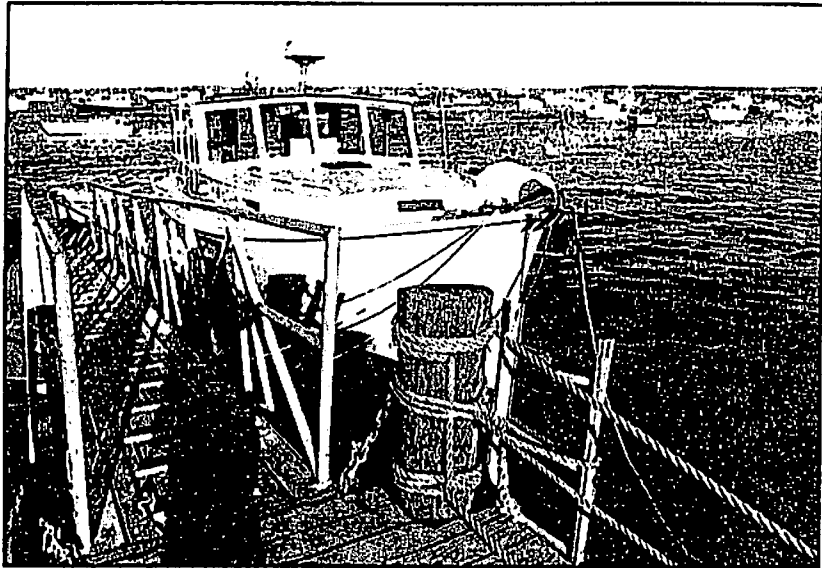
The lowest bid was \$1,872,500, from New Jersey-based Weeks Marine.

Norfolk Dredging of Virginia bid \$1,961,300, and E.J. Smith of Massachusetts bid \$1,995,000.

Before awarding the contract, the federal government must analyze the bids and make sure the contractor meets the required standards, Town Manager Rocco Longo said.

The process could take several weeks, said project manager Duban Montoya of

Duxbury Harbor has not been dredged in 20 years. Continual shoaling now causes many sailboats to get stuck at low tide, said Harbormaster Donald Beers.



During the summer's dredging of Duxbury Bay, 160 moorings inside the federal anchorage will have to be moved, Harbormaster Donald Beers said.

Staff Photo by Bill Wadsworth

the Army Corps of Engineers. He said the government hopes the work will begin in July. It is projected to last four months, he said.

Dredge material must be scooped out from a 21-acre federal anchorage and a mile-long entrance channel in Duxbury Bay. Both are to be dredged to 8 feet deep.

Because the work is expected to begin at Two Rock Creek and move inward toward the harbor, Beers said the boating season shouldn't be disrupted until later in the summer.

"Frankly, I think we've been given a gift," he said. He noted the dredging theoretically could have begun May 15, when the window of opportunity for disposing the material opened.

According to Beers, 160 moorings inside the federal anchorage will have to be moved during the project.

"People are going to be slightly inconvenienced, but it's going to be well-worth it in the long run," Longo said.

Plans also call for dredging areas in front of the Duxbury Yacht Club, the town pier and floats, Bayside Marine and possibly Battelle Ocean Sciences this fall, Beers said.

On May 20, Beers and Longo presented a check for \$669,000 from the town of Duxbury to Col. Earl Richardson of the Army Corps of Engineers to initiate the federal project. The amount — \$501,000 from a state Rivers and Harbor grant and \$168,000 from the town — covers the cost

of towing 240,000 cubic yards of federal dredge material from Duxbury to a disposal site off Wellfleet.

In addition, Duxbury expects to pay \$52,500 for dredging and towing 5,000 cubic yards of material from the town pier area.

The fine-grain silting material has the consistency of "what's at the bottom of a paint can," Beers said. "And when it dries it's like talcum powder."

It has been tested and shown not to contain any hazardous material, officials said.

Beers said the harbor should be dredged every 10 years. But a 1980 state ban on open-water disposal of clean dredge material, coupled with a two-year disposal study that dragged on for a decade, prevented any dredging here, he said.

Finally, in August 1994, the Cape Cod Dredge Material Disposal Site off Wellfleet was approved for use, and the project got back on track.

Beers has worked diligently over the years to push for the dredging, Longo said.

"Without a Donny Beers, I don't know if this project would have occurred," he said.

Boaters Asked to Steer Clear When Dredging Starts Next Week

By June LaBonte

Mariners are being asked to steer clear of the operations and expect navigation through the channel to be complicated once dredging of Duxbury Harbor begins Monday or Tuesday, Harbormaster Don Beers said.

Two 240-foot barges, called scows, have left New York and are expected to anchor Sunday at the cow yard in the middle of Duxbury Bay. Beers estimated it will take roughly 16 hours to ready the equipment, which includes the scows, tugboats and a crane barge.

The harbormaster's office has posted notices at the three local boatyards, the town pier and the Duxbury Yacht Club asking boaters to

cooperate in moving vessels and gear if needed and to watch for additional mariners' notices, Beers said.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which was awarded the \$1.8 million contract, will begin dredging at buoy number 12 in the main shipping channel and is expected to reach anchorage at number 22 in 30 days. The project, which had been expected to start yesterday, will cover the harbor's 22-acre anchorage. It is expected to take 88 days, finishing around the first week in November.

The contract allows 135 days to complete the project.